

Faith First Community Church

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Established January 1, 2024

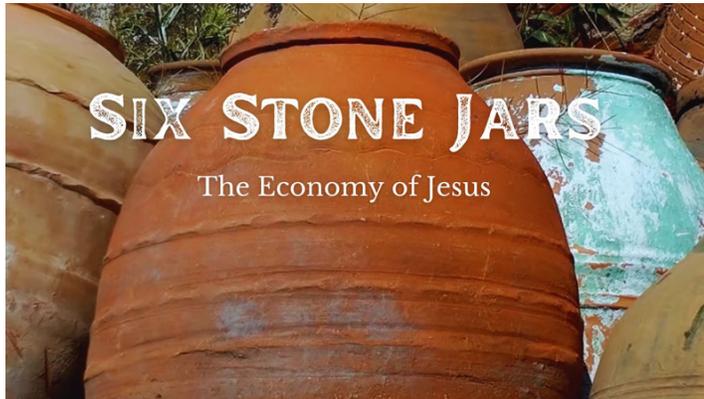
February 2025

Vol. 2-2 Issued Monthly

Rev. Heidi Hulme

Office Hours: 9 am to 12 pm M-TH

Focus on Faith



*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor."
— Luke 4:18*

A miscalculation has occurred. The wedding guests have drunk all the wine before the party is over. At times, life can feel like we're "running out" of so much, and scarcity is shutting down the party.

In these moments, we are invited to turn to the currency and economy of Jesus.

In his economy, the true measure of abundance is fullness for the whole community, not just for some. Let us build the Kin-dom of God by drawing from jars of Hope, Purpose, Healing, Meaning, Vision, and Grace for all people.

- Week 1 **"Fill My House with Hoping"**
- Week 2 **"Fill My Plans with Purpose"**
- Week 3 **"Fill My Wounds with Healing"**
- Week 4 **"Fill My Days with Meaning"**
- Week 5 **"Fill My Future with Vision"**
- Week 6 **"Fill My Cup with Grace"**

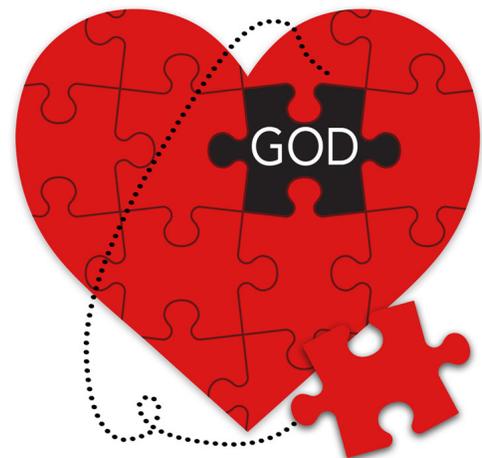
*A worship series by Marcia McFee, Worship Design Studio,
A six-week fully-scripted worship series based on the Gospel readings from the Revised Common Lectionary, Year C In the weeks after Epiphany.*

KINDNESS KICKBACKS

Random Acts of Kindness Day, observed each year on February 17, is a reminder of the power of altruism. Followers of Jesus express kindness selflessly, out of love for God and our neighbors. Yet in return, we reap emotional — and even physical — benefits.

Researchers have identified a "helper's high" that can ease anxiety and depression. Spontaneous or planned acts of "pro-social spending" have been shown to reduce blood pressure, improve heart health, reduce pain and even extend longevity.

For maximum impact, experts recommend getting creative with random acts of kindness and mixing them up. But no matter how you spread kindness, you're bound to experience blessings in return!





Dearest Faith UCC,

A PRAYER FOR PRESIDENTS DAY

David, the boys, and I want to thank you for the very generous gift of money for Christmas! We are saving it for our 30th Anniversary trip in 2025. We love being a part of this church. God is so good, and we are grateful for all God's blessings – especially all of you!

~Peace – The Hulmes

Lord of heaven and earth, we offer you our deepest gratitude for this country and the freedom to worship you. Stir up a sense of stewardship so we all may care for our nation and each inhabitant of it. We pray especially for our leaders, that you will bless them with wisdom and humility. Prompt everyone in positions of authority to pursue righteousness, justice and the welfare of all. Remind us of the psalmist's teaching: "Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord" (Psalm 33:12, NRSV). May that promise be fulfilled "from sea to shining sea." Amen.



FROM THE PASTOR

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your God in heaven." ~ Matthew 5:16

Do you know that you carry with you the presence of Jesus? Do you know what it means to have the presence of Jesus?

Looking at the life of Jesus,

No matter what Jesus did, no matter where he was,

This past week, David and I were running errands and stopped to pick up supper at Jersey Mike's. He and I entered and as we were talking, a woman pushing a walker tried to get in the door. I noticed she was struggling, so I went to help her. I turned back to finish my conversation with David, but I heard her crying.

I walked over and asked what I could do to help her. As she rubbed her hands together, she told me about having to wait for her cab, but the Credit Union lobby closed so she had to wait outside. It was cold, so she decided to walk to Jersey Mike's to wait inside and stay warm. But the walk was brutal.

She shared that she has stage 4 metastatic breast cancer, and being in the cold makes her extremities hurt. (I assume there are a few of you who understand that.) I shared with her that I had cancer as well. I gave her a hug, and as we continued our conversation, I reached into my coat pockets and helped her put on my fuzzy gloves. After a moment, it registered what happened, and she looked at me with eyes of confusion. In between sentences, I told her they were for her, and her face melted, and once again, we were in an embrace.

She noticed David had our bag, and abruptly ended our conversation, thanking me for like the tenth time for the gloves. David looked over and said, "You can keep talking. We realized they forgot one of the sandwiches so it will be a few minutes."

Just like that, we were hugging again, and I was able to pray over her like I wanted to in the beginning.

As David and I headed home, he told me I need to wipe off the words "Tell me what is going on in your life." from my forehead. Of course, he was joking, but here's the thing. Even if it were actually posted on my forehead, I couldn't

stop asking the questions or helping those I see who need help. Even if it is one at a time.

Many of you have come into my office during my office hours, and you always apologize for interrupting me. How many times have you heard me say, "Ministry is interruption."? It is the truth.

I would challenge you to go through and read several (or all!) of Jesus' miracles. Most of them are done because Jesus was interrupted. Most of the time, Jesus had other plans.

He and his friends were enjoying themselves at a wedding where his mother instructed him to do something about the couple running out of wine.

He was teaching and preaching to a crowd of people when Jairus, a synagogue leader, approached him about curing his sick daughter.

Then, he was on his way to Jairus' house when a woman who had been bleeding for 12 years touched his tunic, believing he could heal her. And he did.

He was sleeping soundly in the boat when the disciples woke him because of the storm, and he calmed it.

Carrying the presence of Jesus means that we intentionally choose to meet people where they are, no matter what we are doing at the time. It means that we are intentionally paying attention to what is going on around us, and noticing when people need help, or a hug, or a smile, or a kind word. It means we intentionally show compassion, grace, mercy, and love even when we don't think we have time; even if the person is a stranger; even if it makes us feel uncomfortable.

But Pastor Heidi, walking up to someone who is crying, or even just approaching someone is really hard. Of course it's hard! If it weren't hard, everyone would be doing it, and we'd be living in a whole different kind of world!

But that different kind of world—the Realm of the Kingdom of God, is our goal. And those of us who believe we carry the presence of Jesus within us, must be the ones to begin the conversations. "Is there anything I can pray about for you today?" "What can I help you with today?" "Hi. My name is" "

Kindness, gentleness, mercy, grace, forgiveness, faith, hope, and love. And the greatest of these is LOVE.

Always Peace, Pastor Heidi

BIBLE QUIZ

The short Old Testament book of Lamentations is a set of communal laments (sorrowful songs) about the destruction in 587 B.C. of which city, by which people?

- A. Babylon; the Assyrians
- B. Jerusalem; the Babylonians
- C. Rome; the Greeks
- D. Caesarea Philippi; the Romans



Answer: (See Bible commentaries.)

Hope at the Brick House

We are scheduled to serve at 3:30 p.m. February 13th.

Share-A-Meal

We are not scheduled to serve in February.



**Women's Group
Will meet Feb 6th
At Janelle Hoker's!**

Newsletter articles due the 3rd Sunday of the month.

March Newsletter article deadline is Feb. 16.

March Newsletter will be mailed by Feb. 26.



Board Notes

**Board Meeting
January 12, 2025**

1. New LED lighting will be installed in the Fellowship Hall.
2. The scouts are building us a food box to have inside the church to hold collections for the Little Pantry.
3. The Electric Sign Fund has received some donations, but more are needed. No date for installation has been secured.
4. The annual report has been completed for the annual meeting.
5. New water sensor will be installed in the basement.
6. Next meeting is February 16th at noon.

Treasurer's Report December 2024			
PLEDGE ACCOUNT	MO.PLEDGE	DECEMBER	GIVEN YTD
General Fund	\$ 7,058.00	\$ 6,422.07	\$ 81,071.74
Non-Pledge Gen Fund	\$ -	\$ 1,470.00	\$ 12,059.00
OCWM	\$ 165.00	\$ 165.00	\$ 2,080.00
DOCM	\$ 410.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 3,320.00
Maintenance Reserve	\$ 380.00	\$ 302.50	\$ 4,546.25
Total Giving	\$ 8,013.00	\$ 8,369.57	\$ 103,076.99
GENERAL FUND	MO BUDGET		TOTAL YTD
Pledged & NP Giving	\$ 7,058.00	\$ 7,867.07	\$ 92,661.73
Misc Gen Fund Giving	\$ -	\$ 677.81	\$ 6,348.77
Transfers In	\$ -	\$ 7,894.28	\$ 33,515.46
Total Gen Fund Inc	\$ 7,058.00	\$ 16,439.16	\$ 132,525.96
Pastor Expense	\$ 7,261.00	\$ 9,208.90	\$ 86,086.21
Employee Expense	\$ 1,335.00	\$ 1,629.25	\$ 14,541.61
Church Ministry Exp	\$ 447.00	\$ 294.70	\$ 3,410.63
Office Expense	\$ 599.00	\$ 564.81	\$ 7,041.44
Property Expense	\$ 2,057.00	\$ 1,841.29	\$ 21,446.07
Total Gen Fun Exp	\$ 11,699.00	\$ 13,538.95	\$ 132,525.96
Net General Fund	\$ (4,641.00)	\$ 2,900.21	\$ -

Submitted by Martha Watters



- 1 Mackenzie Walck
- 6 Stephanie Fox
- 11 Gloria Kuehl
- 15 Natalie Walck
Glenn Perreault
- 19 Linda Cox
- 22 Lee Ann Maas
- 28 CJ van der Merwe





CHRISTIAN SYMBOL

CENSER & INCENSE — A censer (or thurible) is a vessel for burning incense during worship. Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches, as well as some Protestant ones, often do this on special occasions. Censers come in many sizes, shapes and designs. A worship leader may swing a chain censer to waft the fragrant smoke over the congregation during a procession or benediction. As incense burns in a censer and smoke wafts upward, it symbolizes prayers of the faithful, floating to God. "May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice" (Psalm 141:2, NIV).

AS WE APPROACH WINTER, please be aware of the weather. If you question whether to be in church, chances are, you shouldn't be in worship! We will announce on Facebook, as well as the television news stations (WQAD and KWQC) if we have to cancel worship. But even if we don't choose to cancel worship, if you don't think it is safe outside, then please stay home and watch us online. Be safe!



Our Faith First Family

Myrene Burton
Jim Sullivan
Bob Cobb
Glenn Perreault
Pam Edmond
Pastor Heidi
Don Walton
Sid and Ardella Boots
Karen Risler
Deb Lobdell
Rev. Barb Koenig

Our Homebound

Paul Dammeier
Connie Disney
Nancy Giles
Dennis Jacobsen
Jan Johnson
Hazel Jones
Virginia Lemons
Harriet Meye
Colleen Skinner
Harry Stroupe

Our Family and Friends

Cindy Norman
Lorie House
Nancy
Fran Frutiger
Kim Rigg
Jake Folcik
Fran Leamer
Allison Byers
Kathy Stiles
Nilofar Basti
Heather
Bruce
Terry Showens
Melissa Haynes
Judy Cummings



Our World

Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Western Sahara, Tunisia, Andorra, Italy, Malta, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, Vatican City, Austria, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, France, Germany, Monaco

Dear Faith First Family,

Once again I thank you for the very generous Christmas gift and for whoever organized to give me the card and money!

The last couple of years, I really enjoyed using the gift money to buy whatever kind of music whenever I wanted. This year, I have spent a chunk of money trying to keep my 2019 Honda running like new and it seems appropriate to use the gift to pay that off. Not much is more important than having a good car for fun and work!

It is always such a treat to play the beautiful grand piano we now have in the sanctuary. Faith First continues to be a warm and welcoming family, and after quite a few years, I am still happy to be here!

Heart-felt blessings to all for the coming year!

Love,

Susan



TRUE LOVE

Many of us celebrate Valentine's Day in both fun and serious ways. Children exchange treats and humorous cards with classmates and friends; some bring home handmade cards for the adults in their lives. Romantic partners may go out to eat and present each other flowers, chocolate, a fancy card — maybe even an engagement ring!

As playful as Valentine's Day can be, it's also a great time to remember the serious side of love, as indicated by these quotes:

"When you love someone, you love the whole person as he or she is, and not as you would like them to be." —Leo Tolstoy
"You don't love someone because they're perfect; you love them in spite of the fact that they're not." —Jodi Picoult
"Love ... is quiet understanding, mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving. ... It settles for less than perfection and makes allowances for human weaknesses." —Ann Landers

We can do the difficult work of true love — actions, not just feelings — only because God loved us first. He did (and does) so despite our imperfection, and in Jesus, God shows us how to share true love with others. This Valentine's Day, if you don't remember any other profound quotes, hold this one in your heart: *"We love because God first loved us."* —1 John 4:19 (NCV)

February 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Faith Formation 9:00 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m.	Troop 828 Meeting 6:30-8 p.m.	Merit Badge 6 to 8 p.m.		Women's Group Janelle Hoker 6:45 p.m.		
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Faith Formation 9:00 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m.	Troop 828 Meeting 6:30-8 p.m.	Merit Badge 6 to 8 p.m.		Hope at the Brick House 3:30 p.m.		
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Faith Formation 9:00 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Week of Compassion Special Offering Board Meeting 12:00 p.m. <i>Newsletter Articles Due</i>	Troop 828 Meeting 6:30-8 p.m.	Merit Badge 6 to 8 p.m.		Basket Class 5:30 p.m.		
23	24	25	26	27	28	
Faith Formation 9:00 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Week of Compassion Special Offering	Troop 828 Meeting 6:30-8 p.m.	Merit Badge 6 to 8 p.m.	<i>Mail Newsletter</i>			